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Culture of peace

Pakistan and Philippines: draft resolution

Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] in particular the right to freedom of thought, of conscience and of religion,

Recalling its resolutions 56/6 of 9 November 2001, on the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations,[2] 57/6 of 4 November 2002, concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, 57/337 of 3 July 2003, on the prevention of armed conflict, 58/128 of 19 December 2003, on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation, 59/23 of 11 November 2004, on the promotion of interreligious dialogue, 59/143 of 15 December 2004, on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, and 59/199 of 20 December 2004, on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance,

Underlining the importance of promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among human beings in all their diversity of religion, belief, culture and language, and recalling that all States have pledged themselves under the Charter to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to sex, language or religion,

Taking note of the adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[3] in which the Heads of State and Government acknowledged the importance of respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity, reaffirmed the value of the dialogue on interfaith cooperation and committed themselves to advancing human welfare, freedom and progress everywhere, as well as to encouraging and promoting

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).
[2] See resolution 56/6.
[3] See resolution 60/1.

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tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation at the local, national, regional and international levels and among different cultures, civilizations and peoples in order to promote international peace and security,

Alarmed that serious instances of intolerance and discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, including acts of violence, intimidation and coercion motivated by religious intolerance, are on the increase in many parts of the world and threaten the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Reaffirming that freedom of expression, media pluralism, multilingualism, equal access to art and to scientific and technological knowledge, including in digital form, and the possibility for all cultures to have access to the means of expression and dissemination are the guarantees of cultural diversity, and that in ensuring the free flow of ideas by word and image, care should be exercised that all cultures can express themselves and make themselves known,

Affirming the need for all States to continue international efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding among civilizations in an effort to prevent the targeting of different religions and cultures,[4] to contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes and to reduce the potential for animosity, clashes and even violence,

Considering that tolerance for cultural, ethnic, and religious and linguistic diversities, as well as dialogue among and within civilizations, is essential for peace, understanding and friendship among individuals and people of different cultures and nations of the world, while manifestations of cultural prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia towards different cultures and religions generate hatred and violence among peoples and nations throughout the world,

Taking note of the valuable contribution of various initiatives at the national, regional and international levels, such as the Alliance of Civilizations, the Bali Declaration on Building Interfaith Harmony within the International Community,[5] the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, the Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures, Enlightened Moderation, the Informal Meeting of Leaders on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace[6] and the Islam-Christianity Dialogue, which are all mutually inclusive, reinforcing and interrelated,

Mindful that those initiatives identify areas for practical action in all sectors and levels of society for the promotion of interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue, understanding and cooperation,

Recognizing the commitment of all religions to peace,

1. *Affirms* that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of the dialogue among civilizations and of the culture of peace;

2. *Recognizes* that respect for religious and cultural diversity in an increasingly globalizing world contributes to international cooperation, promotes enhanced dialogue among religions, cultures and civilizations and helps to create an environment conducive to the exchange of human experience;

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[4] As recognized also in Security Council resolution 1624 (2005).

[5] A/60/254, annex.

[6] See A/60/383.

3. *Recognizes* that, despite intolerance and conflicts that are creating a divide across countries and regions and constitute a growing threat to peaceful relations among nations, all cultures and civilizations share a common set of universal values and can all contribute to the enrichment of humankind;

4. *Urges* States, in compliance with their international obligations, to take all necessary action to combat incitement to or acts of violence, intimidation and coercion motivated by hatred and intolerance based on culture, religion or belief, which may cause discord and disharmony within and among societies;

5. *Reaffirms* that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to political and social stability and peace and enrich the cultural diversity and heritage of society as a whole in the States in which such persons live, and urges States to ensure that their political and legal systems reflect the multicultural diversity within their societies and, where necessary, to improve democratic and political institutions, organizations and practices so that they are more fully participatory and avoid the marginalization and exclusion of, and discrimination against, specific sectors of society;

6. *Acknowledges* the role of the media in bridging gaps and in developing better understanding among various religions, cultures and peoples and in facilitating the policy of dialogue among societies and in assisting to create an environment conducive to the exchange of human experience;

7. *Supports* practical initiatives at the regional and national levels by Governments, faith communities and the media to enable and encourage the media to increase their contribution to the achievement of interfaith and intercultural understanding and cooperation for peace, development and human dignity;

8. *Encourages* the promotion of dialogue among media from various cultures and civilizations and recommends the development of a common platform in creating a global media ethic in order to foster healthy freedom of expression;

9. *Affirms* that the relevant United Nations bodies, including the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, shall endeavour to devise a global strategy to promote universal respect for all religious and cultural values and to address instances of intolerance, discrimination and incitement of hatred against communities or adherents of any religion;

10. *Decides* to hold in 2007 a high-level dialogue on interreligious and intercultural cooperation for the attainment of universal respect for all religious and cultural values;

11. *Also decides* to declare one of the coming years as the Year of Dialogue among Religions and Cultures and, for that purpose, invites Governments and the United Nations system, within existing resources, as well as civil society, to undertake appropriate activities marking the event;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to institutionalize, within existing resources, an interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational unit within the Secretariat in order to ensure overall coordination and coherence in the interreligious, intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue and cooperation efforts of the United Nations system;

13. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.